

The Tragedy of Hamlet

So hallowed and so gracious is that time.

Hor. So haue I heard and doe in part beleue it,
But looke the morne in russet mantle clad
Walkes ore the dew of yon high Eastward hill:
Breake wee our watch vp and by my aduise
Let vs impart what wee haue seen to night
Vnto yong Hamlet, for vpon my life
This spirit dumb to vs, will speake to him:
Doe you consent wee shall acquaint him with it
As needfull in our loues fitting our duty.

Mar. Lets doo't I pray, and I this morning know
Where wee shall find him most conuenient.

Exeunt.

Flourish. Enter Claudius, King of Denmarke, Gertrude the
Queene, Corinfaile: as Polonius, and his Sonne Laertes,
Hamlet cum Aliis.

Claud. Though yet of Hamlet our deare brothers death
The memory bee greene, and that it vs befitted
To beare our hearts in greefe and our whole kingdome,
To be contracted in one browe of woe,
Yet so farre hath discretion fought with nature,
That wee with wisest sorrow thinke on him
Together with remembrance of our selues:
Therefore our sometime Sister, now our Queene
Th'imperiall ioyntresse to this warlike state
Haue wee as twere with a defeated ioy
With an auspicious, and a dropping eye,
With mirth in funerall, and with dirge in mariage,
In equall scale waighing delight and dole
Taken to wife: nor haue wee herein bard
Your better wisdomes, which haue freely gone
With this affaire along (for all our thanks)
Now followes that you know yong Fortinbrasse,
Holding a weake supposall of our worth
Or thinking by our late deare brothers death
Our state to bee disioynt, and out of frame
Colegued with this dreame of his aduantage
Hee hath not faild to pester vs with message

Importing

Prince of Denmarke.

Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bands of law
To our most valiant brother, so much for him:
Now for our selfe, and for this time of meeting,
Thus much the busines is, we haue here writ
To Norway Vncle of young Fortenbrasse
Who impotent and bedred scarcely heares
Of this his Nephewes purpose; to suppress
His further gate heerein, in that the leuies,
The lifts, and full proportions are all made
Out of his subiect, and we heere dispatch
You good Cornelius, and you Valtemand,
Forbearers of this greeting to old Norway,
Giuing to you no further personall power
To busines with the King, more then the scope
Of these delated articles allow:
Farwell, and let your hast commend your duty.

Cor. Vo. In that, and all things will we show our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing, hartely farwell.
And now Laertes whats the newes with you?
You told vs of some sute, what ist Laertes?
You cannot speake of reason to the Dane
And lose your voyce; what wouldst thou begge Laertes?
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking,
The head is not more natiue to the heart
The hand more instrumentall to the mouth
Then is the throne of Denmarke to thy father,
What wouldst thou haue Laertes?

Lar. My dread Lord.
Your leaue and fauour to returne to France,
From whence though willingly I came to Denmarke,
To show my duty in your Coronation;
Yet now I must confesse, that duty done
My thoughts and wishes bend againe toward France,
And bow them to your gracious leaue and pardon.

King. Haue you your fathers leaue, what saies Polonius?

Pol. He hath my Lord wrung from me my slow leaue
By laboursome petition, and at last
Vpon his will I seald my hard consent,